

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00
TRSE-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 OPR-02 /044 W
-----190345Z 081080 /66 L

R 181440Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8725
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
USMISSION NATO
JCS WASHDC
USCINCEUR
CINCUSNAVEUR
CINCUSAFE
CINCUSAREUR
USNMR SHAPE
USDOCOSOUTH
7206TH ABGP ATHENAI APRT GREECE

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: MARR GR US
SUBJECT: FINANCE MINISTRY DENIES PX IS A SOURCE
OF BLACK MARKET ITEMS

REF: ATHENS 0083 (NOTAL)

1. ON JANUARY 17, THE FINANCE MINISTRY ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE
STATING THAT NEWSPAPER REPORTS ALLEGING THAT THE PX SYSTEM
HAS BECOME A CENTER OF CONTRBAND ARE "INACCURATE". THE
RELEASE ADDED THAT "APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES" CONTROL ALL SOURCES
FROM WHICH TAX FREE ARTICLES MIGHT LEAK INTO THE GREEK MARKET.

2. THE MINISTRY'S STATEMENT WAS ISSUED IN RESPONSE TO A LEAD
STORY IN PRO-GOVERNMENT APOGEVMATINI OF THE SAME DATE. THE
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STORY REPORTED THAT OFFICERS OF THE "ASSOCIATION OF GREEK
IMPORTERS OF ELECTRO-AUDIO EQUIPMENT" HAD CHARGED TO THE
NEWSPAPER THAT LEGITIMATE SALES OF HI-FI EQUIPMENT IN
GREECE BY THE MEMBERS RETAIL STORES HAVE BEEN REDUCED
AS A RESULT OF COMPETITION FROM BLACK MARKETEERS
SUPPLIED FROM THE PX SYSTEM. THEY ALSO REPORTEDLY ALLEGED
THAT THE GOVT WAS MAKING NO EFFORT TO CONTROL SALES

AT PX OUTLETS OR THOROUGH THE APO OR TO INSURE THAT AMERICAN PERSONNEL LEAVING GREECE ACCOUNT FOR THE DUTIABLE ITEMS THEY HAVE PURCHASED HERE. (THE ASSOCIATION HAS MADE SIMILAR CHARGES BEFORE.) ACCORDING TO THE APRGEVMATININ STORY, THE ASSOCIATION WILL BE FILING A COMPLAINT ALONG THE ABOVE LINES WITH THE MINISTER OF FINANCE SHORTLY.

3. MOST MORNING AND SOME AFTERNOON PAPERS JAN 18 PRINTED THE MINISTRY'S STATEMENT WITHOUT COMMENT; HOWEVER APOGEVMATINI SAID THAT THE STATEMENT ANSWERED NONE OF THE CHARGES MADE BY THE IMPORTERS ASSOCIATION.

4. ALTHOUGH THE APOGEVMATINI ARTICLE FOCUSED ON HI-FI EQUIPMENT, IT ECHOES A RECENT SERIES OF ARTICLES IN LEFTIST TA NEA WHICH ATTACKED THE ENTIRE RANGE OF DUTY EXCEPTIONS (PX'S, COMMISSARIES, CLASS VI STORES, ETC) EXTENDED TO US MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL IN GREECE.

5. COMMENT: THE ALLEGATIONS ARE NOT NEW. THE NEW SYSTEM ADOPTED TO TIGHTEN ALREADY EXISTING CONTROLS (REFTEL) PROVIDES ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS TO REBUT THE ALLEGATIONS SHOULD THEY BECOME STRIDENT ENOUGH TO WARRANT DOING SO. AT HIS OWN REQUEST, A SENIOR CUSTOMS OFFICIAL WAS RECENTLY ESCORTED THROUGH THE HELLENIKON PX AND BRIEFED ON CONTROL MEASURES. HE EXPRESSED COMPLETE SATISFACTION AND NOTED THAT MANY ITEMS COMMON ON THE LOCAL BLACK MARKET ARE NOT EVEN STOCKED BY THE PX SYSTEM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: COMMISSARY, PRESS COMMENTS, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, CONTRABAND, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BLACK MARKETS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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ISecure: 1
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: FINANCE MINISTRY DENIES PX IS A SOURCE OF BLACK MARKET ITEMS
TAGS: MARR, GR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
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